

UCLA Faculty Association

News and opinion from Dan Mitchell since 2009

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Wednesday, May 14, 2025

Looking for what's missing...



...in the [NY Times](#) review of how Dartmouth has (so far) avoided retribution from the Trump administration.

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The [NY Times](#) published a piece on Dartmouth and how its president has avoided the kind of scrutiny that other Ivy League universities have gotten from the Trump administration.* Excerpt:

Some 600 college leaders recently signed a letter opposing the Trump administration's interference in higher education. The only Ivy League president who did not sign the letter was Sian Beilock, the president of Dartmouth College. Instead, she wrote her own letter to her campus, saying that higher education institutions should strive to do better, "to further our standing as a trusted beacon for knowledge and truth." ...

There is only one brief reference in the article to "dialogue" without any further elaboration:

...Dr. Beilock's supporters see her as a champion of free expression and dialogue among people with different political viewpoints. They say she has been consistent, supporting these ideas long before the Trump administration or even the Hamas attack on Israel complicated campus politics...

What's missing in the article is what Dartmouth specifically did, and what most others - including UCLA - didn't do, in the immediate aftermath of Oct. 7, 2023: Seek to educate students on the conflict.

Of course, everyone is free to have opinions on everything and anything. But it is also (presumably) the mission of educational institutions to provide resources to inform those opinions. Dartmouth was notable for trying to address that mission:

<https://ia801406.us.archive.org/35/items/a-laugh-a-tear-a-mitzvah/Dartmouth%20after%20Oct.%207%2C%202023%20attack%20NBC%2011-25-2023.mp4>

<https://dn721903.ca.archive.org/0/items/a-laugh-a-tear-a-mitzvah/Dartmouth%20Second%20Discussion%20on%20the%20Horrific%20Events%20Unfolding%20in%20Israel%20and%20Gaza%2010-12-2023.mp4>

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*<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/05/11/us/politics/dartmouth-college-trump.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: academic freedom, Dartmouth, politics

Tuesday, May 13, 2025

A cautionary note on pension finance from CIO Bachhar



We'll be providing our usual coverage of the May 13-15 Regents meetings as time permits. But it is worth noting a brief excerpt from today's meeting of the Investments Committee. Regent Makarechian took note of item F6 to be discussed in tomorrow's meeting of Finance and Capital Strategies:

F6 Action: University of California Retirement Plan – Amendment of a Previously Approved Action: Authorization to Maintain the Current University Employer Contribution Rate for 2025-26 and to No Longer Transfer

\$700 Million from the Short Term Investment Pool in 2025-26.

He asked Chief Investments Officer Bachhar for his opinion on delaying previously-scheduled pension contribution increases and cancelation of the STIP contribution in the face of

The Council of UC Faculty Associations

- [Objection to AB 1217, AB 684, and AB 500 – Protecting UC's Institutional Autonomy](#)
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- [CUCFA and AFT call upon UC to immediately address Student Visa Revocations](#)

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- [Betrayed: UC Is About to Make \\$267 Million in Unnecessary Budget Cuts, Harming Instruction and Undermining Goodwill with the State Legislature and Governor \(Guest Post\) - 5/30/2025](#)
- [Liner Note 26. the University of California's Fiscal Crisis - 5/17/2025](#)
- [Liner Note 25. The Next 100 Days: Don't Make the Trump Damage Worse - 5/14/2025](#)

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anticipated federal and state budget cuts.* Bachhar noted that the funding ratio for the pension has for years been in the mid-80% range but that the faculty wants the goal to be 100% funding. He diplomatically says that if the goal is 100%, relying on growth of the portfolio cannot be the strategy. Only a combination of growth and contributions will get you to the goal. Put another way, Bachhar did not come across as a fan of the F6 approach.

You can see this exchange at the link below:

<https://ia800300.us.archive.org/27/items/cio-bachhar-on-deferring-pension-funding-5-13-2025/CIO%20Bachhar%20on%20deferring%20pension%20funding%205-13-2025.mp4>.

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*Makarechian is a member of both the Investments Committee and Finance and Capital Strategies.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 7:29 PM

No comments:

Labels: [pension](#), [UC Regents](#), [ucrp](#)

Two Statements



At its upcoming meeting of May 15, the UCLA Legislative Assembly of the Academic Senate is being asked to endorse the two resolutions below. One is from the UC Academic Council. The other is a statement by members of the Big

Ten Academic Alliance:

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Academic Council Statement: The Defense of the University

April 8, 2025

Higher education is under direct and sustained attack. Deliberate and systemic shifts in the federal government’s approach to higher education—which include defunding crucial research, intervening in academic affairs, and policing expression—will have profound downstream consequences, threatening the integrity of knowledge production and the public role of universities in a democratic society. The mission of the University of California is thus existentially at risk.

Unity will be critical in the weeks, months, and years ahead, as the University of California fights to preserve its capacity to prepare the next generation of the workforce. These graduates will be leading health care providers, educators, authors, entrepreneurs, and innovators. Given the opportunity, they will conduct the research leading to breakthroughs in science and technology, new treatments for disease, new forms of creative expression, and new insights about the world we inhabit. Let us remember that our university played a foundational role in the development of the Internet, satellite communications, nuclear energy, biotechnology, agronomy, and many other domains that have substantially improved our collective well-being. If our research and teaching mission is compromised, what future discoveries will be lost, and at what cost to the public health and welfare of all Californians?

The Academic Senate is one of the pillars of shared governance of the University of California, along with the Regents and the administration. Policies and practices of shared governance have served the institution well during previous crises, and we will have even greater need of them as we move forward. The urgency and complexity of the problems we confront necessitate collaborative efforts. We need to stand, speak, and work together—informed by our shared, fundamental principles—in order to guard our mission. This approach requires that the Regents, President, and Chancellors of the University of California actively engage faculty and leverage their expertise to secure a strong future for the University and the many constituencies it serves. Now is the time for bravery to override fear.

We thus call on the Regents, President, and Chancellors of the University of California to expend every effort, commit necessary resources, and use all legal measures to defend our ability to conduct consequential, transformative research and provide high-quality teaching and mentoring. We call on our leaders to ensure the safety and privacy of students, faculty, and staff. And we further call on our leaders to protect academic freedom and faculty control of the curriculum—proactively and publicly.

While current events may seem shockingly unprecedented, there are historical parallels. From these we learn that the future is contingent upon how we respond now. We must come together as a community to strengthen our ability to fulfill our institutional mission and uphold our commitment to the state of California. These collective efforts extend to working together with colleagues at other universities to envision and implement plans for preserving higher education’s ability to contribute to the common good.

Let the future historical record show that we rose to the challenge of defending the University of California, and we did so in ways that did not betray its core values.

The distinctive mission of the University is to serve society as a center of higher learning, providing long-term societal benefits through transmitting advanced knowledge, discovering new knowledge, and functioning as an active working repository of organized knowledge. That obligation, more specifically, includes undergraduate education, graduate and professional education, research, and other kinds of public service, which are shaped and bounded by the central pervasive mission of discovering and advancing knowledge.

Fiat Lux.

University of California

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Contributors

- California Policy Issues
- Toby Higbie
- UCLA Faculty Association

Systemwide Academic Senate Council, 2024-2025

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Statement in Support of the Core Mission and Shared Values of Higher Education in the United States of America

Private and public higher education institutions in the United States have for over three centuries contributed to the public good, and the nation's global leadership position, through the advancement and sharing of knowledge, and by providing pathways for workforce development.

Research funding in universities is judiciously used to drive innovation, providing an exceptional return on investment that advances economic growth, health and well-being, scientific breakthroughs, national security, and cultural and civic development. Academic research and scholarly expertise are also vital to excellent teaching and training, ensuring that the U.S. workforce of the future remains globally competitive.

Higher education in the United States continuously sets standards for international excellence and attracts students and colleagues from all over the world. The contributions of international scholars, staff, and students to U.S. higher education are integral to its leadership position.

U.S. higher education's global excellence and public impact require working and learning environments that ensure opportunities for all. Initiatives that reduce discrimination are part of that imperative.

As recent challenges to funding and programming threaten to dismantle the core values and mission of higher education, at great detriment to the public at large and the U.S.'s international reputation, the undersigned faculty governance bodies affirm the following:[1]

[1] *This resolution was written collaboratively by faculty governance leaders at universities in the Big Ten Academic Alliance. It does not belong to the Big Ten or any member institution, and is open for any faculty governance body to endorse. It was inspired by the 2/19/25 resolution passed by the Faculty Senate of the University of Virginia, "Resolution on External Challenges to Faculty Roles and Responsibilities."*

1) Public and private universities serve the public good and contribute to the U.S.'s national and global excellence, through teaching, research, and service.

2) Cuts to research funding in higher education will undermine scientific innovation, health, societal progress, and the U.S.'s leadership position, with long-lasting detrimental impacts.

3) Academic scholarship and research, through peer review and professional accreditation, lead to evidence-based expertise, not partisan viewpoints.

4) We support academic freedom and free speech, and those who exercise their rights thereto, citizens and non-citizens alike.

5) We oppose the targeted harassment of faculty members for their expertise.

6) We support the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution which guarantees the right of people to peaceably assemble. All community members who engage in peaceful assembly, regardless of viewpoint or citizenship status, should have the opportunity to do so without retaliation.

7) We agree with the Department of Education that discrimination based on race, color, or national origin (Title VI), sex (Title IX), and disability (ADA) is reprehensible, affirming our legal and moral obligation as educational institutions not to discriminate based on these or other identifying characteristics. Initiatives that help to reduce such discrimination, when grounded in best practice, increase opportunities and ensure real meritocracy for all.

8) We affirm the essential role of transparent and collaborative shared governance in maintaining the integrity of our universities, and commit to its continued strengthening.

9) Lastly, we call upon faculty, students, staff, alumni, and community partners of our universities to unite in support of the core mission, values, and academic freedoms of higher education in the U.S.

Endorsements are listed in chronological order. Time taken to endorse reflects the varying timelines and procedures of individual governance bodies.

The Ohio State University Faculty Council, endorsement vote 4/3/2025

University of Nebraska Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/4/2025

Northwestern University Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/9/2025

University of Oregon Senate, endorsement vote 4/9/2025

Michigan State University Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/15/2025

University of Michigan Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/20/2025

Purdue University Senate, endorsement vote 4/21/2025

University of Minnesota University Senate, endorsement vote 4/24/2025

University of Massachusetts-Amherst Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/25/2025

Rutgers University Senate, endorsement vote 4/25/2025

- University of Iowa Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/29/2025
- Pennsylvania State University Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 4/29/2025
- University of California Berkeley Divisional Council, endorsement vote 4/30/2025
- University of Massachusetts-Lowell Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 5/5/2025
- University of Massachusetts Boston Faculty Council, endorsement vote 5/5/2025
- University of Connecticut University Senate, endorsement vote 5/5/2025
- University of Wisconsin Madison Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 5/6/2025
- Brown University Faculty Executive Committee, endorsement vote 5/6/2025
- Drake University Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 5/7/2025
- University of Southern California Academic Senate, endorsement vote 5/7/2025
- University of Washington Faculty Senate, endorsement vote 5/8/2025

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:35 AM No comments:

Labels: [politics](#), [UCLA](#)

♪Take Us Out of the Ball Game♪ - Part 8 (Executive Order)

UCLA's baseball field on VA property is back in the news: From the [LA Times](#): *President Trump signed an executive order Friday directing the Department of Veterans Affairs to create a center for homeless veterans on its West Los Angeles campus. The order set a goal of housing up to 6,000 homeless veterans at the center, which Trump named the National Warrior Independence Center, and ordered federal agencies to "ensure that funds that may have been spent on housing or other services for illegal aliens are redirected to construct, establish, and maintain" it.*

Trump ordered VA Secretary Doug Collins to prepare an action plan to create the housing by Jan. 1, 2028. He also directed Collins to report within 60 days on "options like expanding office hours, offering weekend appointments, and increasing the use of virtual healthcare." ...

The order comes at a critical moment in a trail of litigation over the VA's management of the campus. A decision is expected any day from the U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on a federal judge's ruling that the VA had failed a fiduciary duty to provide housing for veterans. U.S. District Judge David O. Carter ordered the VA to immediately create about 100 units of temporary housing on the 388-acre campus and to build more than 2,000 units of permanent and temporary housing. He also invalidated leases of portions of that land to civilian entities including UCLA and [the Brentwood] school...

In a lengthy preamble, Trump's executive order alluded to... the closing of veterans' housing in the 1970s and improper leases of veterans' land that led to the two lawsuits. ...*

Full story at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2025-05-10/trump-orders-va-to-house-6-000-veterans-in-a-west-la-national-center-for-warrior-independence>.

===

*From the Executive Order:

...The story of the West Los Angeles Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Center is indicative of this failure. More than one hundred years ago, Senator John Percival Jones and Arcadia Bandini de Stearns Baker generously donated hundreds of acres of land that they owned in West Los Angeles on the condition that it be used to house disabled veterans. The campus once featured a chapel, billiard hall, 1,000-seat theater, and housed about 6,000 veterans, but the Federal Government has since allowed this crown jewel of veteran care to deteriorate over the last few decades.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (Department) leased parts of the property to a private school, private companies, and the baseball team of the University of California, Los Angeles, sometimes at significantly below-market prices. As of 2024, there were approximately 3,000 homeless veterans in Los Angeles, more than in any other city in the country and accounting for about 10 percent of all of America's homeless veterans. Many of these heroes live in squalor in Los Angeles's infamous "skid row." ...

Full order at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/05/keeping-promises-to-veterans-and-establishing-a-national-center-for-warrior-independence/>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:20 AM No comments:

Labels: [athletics](#), [UCLA](#)

Monday, May 12, 2025

What he said and didn't

EVC Darnell Hunt was interviewed by Stuart Wolpert at an after-lunch joint meeting of the Retirees Assn. and the Emeriti Assn. on May 8 at the Faculty Club (now the University Club). Five points in particular were noted by yours truly:





1) UCLA and UC - while joining some litigation concerning the current policies coming from DC about higher ed - is not leading the charge like Harvard. It is instead being "strategic." No encampments will be allowed as per the time-place-manner policies. Last spring's encampment was in fact in violation of the rules in place then. But because other groups previously had similarly violated the rules, the rules were not enforced because that would have been viewpoint selective. He did *not* say anything about the lawsuit against UCLA arising from last spring. Blog readers will likely know UCLA at first was going to appeal a temporary injunction stemming from that case but decided not to. It is still defending

against the underlying lawsuit.

2) In order to get federal grants, applicants must now certify that they have no illegal DEI policies in effect. UCLA's position is that because of California's Proposition 209 (anti-affirmative action), UCLA has no illegal DEI policies. He did not mention the recent dropping of DEI statements for faculty personnel actions which existed under 209.*

3) After the student-worker strike a couple of years ago - which boosted labor costs - and given the current outlook of reduced federal and state support, the number of PhDs UCLA can train is being re-examined. The job outlook for PhD graduates has also been diminished by federal policy. Some departments in the past created sections staffed by PhD student TAs in order to support those students. Now only needed sections will be staffed. And UCLA is looking at whether even needed sections might be replaced by such tech alternatives as AI and remote/hybrid classes.

4) UCLA had to move into the Big Ten athletic conference for financial reasons because of its athletic program's deficit. The move substantially increased TV revenue, but even now there is a deficit. College athletics are becoming more commercial and payments to athletes as employees is likely. He did not mention the action of the Regents that required UCLA to subsidize Berkeley as a result of the move.

5) Nobody really knows what to do with the campus of a defunct Catholic college in Palos Verdes that former Chancellor Block bought for \$80 million. Whatever it will be, it will need to be a self-contained program about, maybe, climate.

==

*A lawsuit charging the UCLA Med School with using affirmative action despite Prop 209 was filed the same day as the interview. EVC Hunt may not have been aware of that lawsuit. See:

<https://uclafacultyassociation.blogspot.com/2025/05/med-school-lawsuit.html>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at 3:30 AM No comments: 

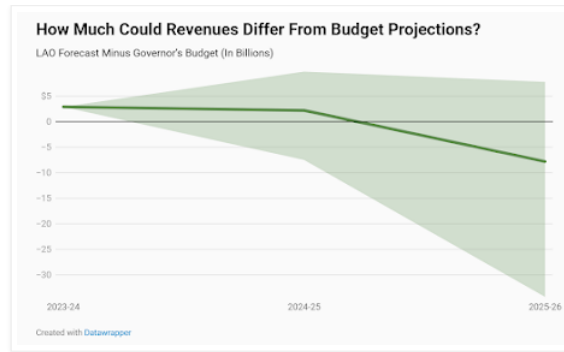
Labels: [athletics](#), [diversity](#), [faculty center](#), [politics](#), [UC Regents](#), [UCLA](#)

Peering into the Future

The governor's May Revise budget is due and it depends partly on the revenue outlook for the state. As it happens, the LAO recently made its projections and the key take-away is uncertainty:

Strong Growth This Year, Muted Expectations Moving Forward. *Our updated forecast anticipates revenues from the state's three largest taxes (income, corporation, and sales) will post strong growth in the current fiscal year. Moving into the budget year, however, our revenue forecast is essentially flat, reflecting mounting risks and headwinds. Total collections across the budget window (2023-24 and 2025-26) roughly match the assumptions in the January Governor's Budget. The timing of those collections, however, is somewhat different, with more revenue attributed to the prior and current years and less revenue expected in the budget year.*





...Strong Income Tax Collections Have Driven Recent Revenue Growth. Our forecast has revenues ending the current year (2024-25) up almost 20 percent from two years ago, considerably above the average two-year growth rate of 13 percent. Surging income tax collections underlie this growth. In just the last twelve months, total income tax collections have grown over 15 percent. More real-time measures of income tax collections show that growth has downshifted somewhat but remains solid. April estimated payments, which reflect how much taxpayers expect to owe for 2025, were up more than 10 percent from last year. Similarly, April income tax withholding grew 5 percent from a year ago.

Path to Continued Growth Appears Narrow. Typically, income tax collections like we have seen recently would suggest a positive revenue outlook. Our current forecast, however, is dampened by several factors. Some of these factors, such as the state's stagnant economy and the stock market's questionable sustainability, are issues we have raised previously but about which we remain concerned. Other factors, such as potential impacts of expanded tariffs, are new developments that add strain to an already tenuous situation. Taken together, these issues suggest the path to future growth could be narrow.

California Economy Has Been Stagnant for Some Time. The state's economy has been in an extended slowdown for over two years. The labor market has struggled, however, is dampened by several factors. Some of these factors, such as the state's stagnant economy and the stock market's questionable sustainability, are issues we have raised previously but about which we remain concerned. Other factors, such as potential impacts of expanded tariffs, are new developments that add strain to an already tenuous situation. Taken together, these issues suggest the path to future growth could be narrow.

Stock Market Propping Up Income Tax Collections. Income tax collections have surged over the last two years despite a weak labor market. Collections instead have been driven by the stock market, which, despite the recent volatility, is up almost 40 percent from two years ago. This is a precarious basis for revenue growth, however. As recent weeks have shown, stock markets gains can come and go quickly and unpredictably. And despite some declines, there are still reasons to be worried gains of the last two years may not be sustainable. Measures of how "expensive" stocks are remain at historically high levels. Additionally, investors have taken on increased amounts of debt to buy stocks. While these observations are far from conclusive, they point to a significant risk to the state's revenue outlook.

Federal Policy Turbulence Puts Fragile Economy at Risk. The risks posed by California's stagnant economy and a potentially overheated stock market have been magnified by recent federal policy actions. Over the last few months, the Trump administration has taken numerous actions to expand and modify tariffs charged on imports from other countries. These tariffs will create new costs for consumers and businesses and likely place some drag on the economy. The extent of these impacts, however, is uncertain. To inform our forecast, we looked to some imperfect signals of potential impacts:

- **Declining Consumer Sentiment.** Escalating tariffs appear to have created significant unease among consumers, who report being worried about potential impacts on prices. Since the beginning of the year, a commonly-cited measure of consumer sentiment has dropped 30 percent, to historic lows. Similar drops in sentiment have occurred nine times in the last three decades. These drops have not universally signaled a coming downturn. On average, however, the state's labor market and revenues have been weaker than normal following such episodes.
- **Downgraded Expectations Among Economic Forecasters.** Confidence in the economy also appears to have soured among economic forecasters. According to a long-standing survey of forecasters (Blue Chip Economic Indicators), expectations for gross domestic product growth over the next few quarters are among the lowest in the survey's history. Survey readings have only been this low three

times. Two of these episodes aligned with recessions. The third was in 2023, when economists consistently anticipated a near-term slowdown in the U.S. economy that did not materialize.

Full release at <https://lao.ca.gov/LAOEconTax/Article/Detail/777>.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments:    

Labels: [governor](#), [LAO](#), [State Budget](#)

Sunday, May 11, 2025

Brown Took the Bait: It couldn't happen here, right?



A Brown University undergraduate named Alex Shieh, who generally takes conservative political positions and writes about them, decided to be a one-man DOGE. So he wrote emails to a bunch of Brown administrators asking them what they did.

Brown then had two choices:

- 1) Ignore the emails.
- 2) Start an investigation of Shieh.

Which of the two do you suppose the Brown administration selected? From the [Brown Daily Herald](#):

...After Shieh sent emails to around 3,800 administrators at Brown asking them to "describe what tasks you performed in the past week," he was notified on March 20 that the University was launching a "Preliminary Review" into alleged violations of Brown's Code of Student Conduct...

University Spokesperson Brian Clark wrote in an email to *The Herald* that Brown's investigation into Shieh "absolutely is not" a free speech issue...

Full story at <https://www.browndailyherald.com/article/2025/05/gop-congressman-questions-browns-low-endowment-tax-disciplinary-proceedings-for-bloatbrown-creator>.

Of course, all of this has now attracted Congressional attention to Brown. From the same article:

..."When these institutions, which operate in a largely tax-free world, appear more interested in stifling dissenting viewpoints and inquiry into their administrative bloat, it prompts serious questions about their tax-exempt status and how their large endowments contribute to the broader public good," [Congressman Troy] Nehls wrote. In addition to asking about the endowment, Nehls urged the University to "reconsider any disciplinary action" against Shieh...

And there is now this from Shieh:

Or direct to <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DJKFCSHp4A/>.

There is an obvious lesson to be learned here, so I won't say what it is.

Posted by California Policy Issues at [3:30 AM](#) No comments:    

Labels: [academic freedom](#), [Brown University](#)

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